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ABSTRACT

Student affairs professionals in higher education are responsible for fostering a sense of community on campus. It is their job to help students connect the cognitive, affective, and behavioral components of learning, and to help them reflect on their learning and use it in their work and daily lives. There has been little research on the effects of diversity among college students. In a review of programs in counseling, it was determined that a small number included a diversity requirement. The lack of programs led NASPA to undertake a study of diversity efforts on America's college campuses. NASPA invited student affairs professionals and faculty to use their campus sites for small research projects concerning the impact of diversity on students' lives. This publication contains summaries of the 17 projects that were chosen for funding. These studies paint a revealing picture of diversity as it is being experienced on college campuses around the country. Some of the findings are unexpected, even counterintuitive. Yet they reflect the real world, in which students find themselves more unlike one another, in terms of ethnicity, age, and sexual orientation, than ever before. Some of the identified themes that run throughout the studies include: (1) "diversity" can have different meanings to students, depending on their age, background, and other personal and social factors; (2) students tend to come to college with minds and hearts open to accept, and learn from, new experiences; and (3) on-campus residents provide a variety of excellent opportunities to teach diversity as a positive student value. (JDM)

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REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

Summaries of research sponsored by NASPA:
Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education

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Diversity on Campus:
Reports from the Field

Summaries of research sponsored by

NASPA

Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education

February 2000

The studies summarized in this publication are available in their entirety on the Internet at http://www.naspa.org

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Why NASPA commissioned studies on diversity

Student affairs professionals in higher education are responsible for fostering a sense of community on campus. We are the individuals who manage counseling and health services, international programs, and the administration of Greek life (fraternities and sororities), residential life, student activities, and student government. It is our job to help students connect the cognitive, affective, and behavioral components of learning. We help students reflect on their learning and use it in their work and daily lives.

Until recently, there was little research on the effects of diversity among college students. In 1981, NASPA conferences offered only five program sessions on multiculturalism and racial, ethnic, and sexual diversity. By 1997 the number of these sessions had grown to 55, but student affairs professionals were raising additional questions about theory and practice that needed to be addressed by new, comprehensive research. In addition, in 1997 a review of programs in counseling and student development at 85 universities revealed that only 30 programs included a diversity requirement and only 16 offered specific courses on diversity.

The paucity of programs led NASPA's Board of Directors and its Research Division to undertake a study of diversity efforts on America's college campuses. With generous support from the Ford Foundation, NASPA invited student affairs professionals and faculty to use their campuses as sites for small research projects concerned with the impact of diversity on students' learning. The responses to the invitation included proposals that employed a variety of methodologies to gather data, including focus groups and written and oral surveys. This publication contains summaries of the 17 projects that were chosen for funding.

We believe that this initial research will encourage NASPA's 8,000 members to continue to explore additional ways that diversity contributes to the goals of education. We hope it also will contribute to campus climates in which students thrive and that it will ultimately foster research into the effects of diversity on students' behavior later in life.

Learning what diversity really means

The 17 studies (16 completed, one in progress) paint a revealing picture of diversity as it is being experienced on college campuses around the country. Some of the findings are unexpected—even counterintuitive. Yet they reflect the real world, in which students find themselves more unlike one another, in terms of ethnicity, age, and sexual orientation, than ever before.

We hope that NASPA members and their colleagues in responsible positions throughout higher education will apply the findings to their planning and administration of campus life. To assist in that regard, NASPA's leadership together with the Advisory Board for Diversity Research identified themes that run throughout the studies:

- "Diversity" may have a host of different meanings to students, depending on their age, background, and other personal and social factors. Few understand "diversity" to refer only to the racial or ethnic backgrounds of their campus peers. Even more significant, many students believe that campus diversity can be achieved only if it broadly includes older students, persons with disabilities, gay, lesbian, transgendered and questioning individuals, and others with minority status of one kind or another. Furthermore, students generally feel that real diversity thrives only within a college or university campus atmosphere that welcomes and accepts all. (Sprague & Chliwniak, page 40)
- Students tend to come to college with minds and hearts open to accept—and learn from—new experiences. Most bring with them few prejudices; they seem to be generally inclined toward having positive interactions with their peers and treating one another as individuals. However, left to their own devices, students fall into the habit of associating with those most like themselves. The findings suggest an opportunity for college and university administrators to take a more active role to promote positive intergroup encounters that surmount traditional racial, ethnic, and other barriers to social intercourse. (Cotton, Kelley, and Sedlacek, page 16; Landrum, Dillinger, & Vandernoot, page 32; Vaughan, page 47)
- Regardless of background, students will tend to accept and appreciate diversity on campus if they have had a broad range of positive experiences that were deliberately structured to achieve the goals of acceptance and appreciation. Those experiences may include, but also go beyond, formal classroom and laboratory settings. (Pike, page 38)
- Team sports rank especially high among educational experiences that promote mutual respect and a sense of community among diverse students. With a specific goal (winning) and a clear adversary (the opposing team), student athletes overcome individual differences and bond with one another. Academic faculty and staff who work directly with students may be able to foster the same positive feelings within the classroom through the use of project teams and other pedagogic devices. (Wolf-Wendel, Toma, & Morphew, page 49)
- Students tend to arrive on campus with a high level of tolerance; most are positively inclined toward attempts at diversity education. As a result, they are likely to give campus administrators the benefit of the doubt when diversity-centered programs are introduced. Programs specifically designed to promote better understanding of a particular minority group (e.g., Asian American Studies) are likely to be well received. (Kiang, page 23)
- Each student belongs to many different groups simultaneously (e.g., white, female, heterosexual; Latino, male, Catholic), but some groups may have greater or lesser social status than others; hence, it is possible for an enlightened administration to structure many kinds of opportunities in different campus venues to enable students to explore issues of status and acceptance. (Croteau, Talbot, Lance, & Evans, page 18)
- College and university administrators should focus more attention on the creation of structured opportunities in which students are able to interact positively with

peers from diverse backgrounds. Administrators in higher education cannot rely solely on mandates from outside institutions, such as legislatures or the courts, because those mandates may change, with potentially negative results, such as a reversal of good-faith efforts to institutionalize the campus value of diversity. (Lee, page 35)

- On-campus student residences provide a variety of excellent opportunities to teach diversity as a positive student value. However, student housing administrators tend to focus too much attention and energy on exact numerical representations of minorities in campus housing. Their major concern should be the quality of the total residential experience for all students. Students themselves tend to be less concerned with numbers and precise racial or ethnic ratios as they move beyond their freshman year. They typically seem to prefer a residence that reflects the diverse nature of the campus overall. (Koehler & Skvoretz, page 29)
- In pursuing innovative ways to foster diversity as an educational resource, some administrators may wish to encourage experimentation with new technologies. Distance learning technologies can provide students with valuable information about diverse groups, although they are neither more nor less effective than in-person instruction. (Guth, Lopez, & Fisher, page 21)
- While campus administrators may enthusiastically or even aggressively pursue diversity, they need to be sensitive to certain tensions that may exist within underrepresented communities regarding the extent to which the members of those communities can or wish to adopt cultural patterns of the majority. (Bennett & Coaxum, page 9)
- Research thus far suggests that students in small groups, majority or minority, will freely give voice to their frustrations and discontents and support others in the group who share such views. Written student surveys tend to yield quite different results, however. Students present far fewer negative responses and indicate that they are generally satisfied that they receive fair treatment from other students and from the campus administration and faculty. (Bensimon, Nora, Patriquin, Johnson, & Throgmorton, page 12)
- Although generally positive and optimistic by nature, students tend to detect quickly whether their college or university is making a genuine commitment to diversity as a positive campus value. Students are frankly disdainful of "paper missions" and want to see substantive proof that their institutions are making a serious effort to create a diverse and accepting community. (Farrell, Adams, Biberman, McKeage, & Wooden, page 20, Bensimon et al., page 12)
- The enunciation of a campus-wide policy of respect and support for diversity, laudable as it may be, is not sufficient. Essential to the success of such a policy is the training of faculty and student affairs staff to shape attitudes and engage in activities that are consistent with such a policy. Listening skills should be part of such training. Equally important, the administration must make it clear that faculty and staff will be evaluated, at least in part, on their ability to accept and carry out the institution's commitment to diversity. (King & Howard-Hamilton, page 26; Wolf-Wendel et al., page 49; Tyrell & Crowl, page 44)

Patterns of Intragroup and Intergroup Interactions Among Black Students on a Predominantly White Campus

By Sybril Brown Bennett, PhD, Assistant Professor, and James Coaxum, III, PhD, Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership, Vanderbilt University

Introduction and Significance

This study examines the concept and significance of race in intragroup and intergroup peer interactions among black students attending a predominantly white university.

The term "black" has been deliberately selected to be inclusive of the multiple participant ethnicities. It is also used to further mask the identities of research participants. Not all of the interviewees were born in the United States. If the participants' ethnicities were revealed, their anonymity would be lost.

Methods and Analysis

A survey was used to obtain a demographic profile of the black students on campus. The survey asked students about their parents' professions, incomes, education, and experience; the type of pre-collegiate school the student attended, as well as religious affiliation, home of record, year of study, employment status, and participation in campus activities.

Following the survey, open-ended interviews were conducted with 21 students who were selected from among those who responded to the survey.

The university has an affluent student body, and the black students on campus are considered to be more affluent than their same-race counterparts at other institutions. Their families are also more highly educated than the general population. More than 85 percent of respondents were not first-generation college students.

Findings

Students learned one of three messages about race from their parents:

(1) Silence communicated the absence of informed racial lessons and led some students to mislabel or deny racial incidents when they occurred.

(2) A student received a conflicting message when a parent discussed race but instructed the child to ignore a racial incident. Without a clear understanding of the nature of race, racism, and racist behavior and how one should interpret it, students were left to carve a meaning out of a situation they did not completely comprehend.

(3) Some students learned clear messages about race. They were taught to value the black collective and that they would have to work harder than a white person to achieve the same level of success. Students who received clear messages about race may be better able to assert their individualism without sacrificing their racial identity.

When students were asked whether they felt they belonged on campus, most said that the university was a microcosm of the real world. Many did not feel welcome but did, nonetheless, feel they belonged on campus.

The majority of students had negative encounters with their same-race peers when they were young, but many now have a predominantly black peer group. Interactions with same-race peers are now important, even necessary. Most black students have an extensive network of friends, numerous social outlets, and supportive relationships among their peers, which strengthens their resolve to stay in college. Many students noted that they could depend on their same-race peers to supply notes if they missed a day of class, to be a study partner, and to serve as a dependable support system in other ways. Many of the engineering students often chose to take classes, study, and participate in academic activities together.

Several interviewees said that mealtimes were often the only time during the day when they had the opportunity to socialize with other black people, and they actively sought out their peers, particularly for dinner. It was, in essence, their family time. They did not believe they were self-segregating.

Interracial dating is a touchy issue in the black student community. Several women expressed strong objections to black men dating white women.

Most students were unable to answer questions on the concept of blackness and black culture. Some students discussed intragroup alienation or being ostracized by others for not conforming to a set of informal rules that govern a same-race peer's concept of how a person should act. Even some students who grew up in a predominantly black environment learned negative messages about race. Students suggested that parents need to provide clear messages to their children, regardless of environment, and to promote positive perceptions about race and about themselves as members of the racial group.

Conclusions

Differential social treatment occurs among high-achieving and low-achieving black students. Although most students are academically successful, they may be paying a psychological and social price. Many have adopted a variety of defense mechanisms to combat negative treatment, including separating themselves from their same-race peers, using emotional outbursts, wanting to drop out of school or enroll somewhere else, and changing their behavior to fit in with their peers.

Many black students are bicultural. They have assumed dual methods of cultural

adaptation, one for the mainstream and one for the native culture. This typically means assimilating into the white culture. Assimilation compels some black people to adopt a practice of alternating biculturalism, in which they alternate between two well-developed but distinctly different cultural-behavioral repertoires. Some students practice blended biculturalism, in which they have melded the black and white cultures into a unified cultural potpourri. Some researchers label this struggle a duel between micro and macro levels of race construction.

Racial identity formation is an individual and social process. The identities of the black collegians in this study have been influenced by education, the media, life experiences, parents, peers, and through community interactions.

The research is significant because it challenges the underlying assumption that black intragroup peer interactions are based solely on race. Negative encounters with black peers may or may not affect future intragroup and intergroup interactions. Race is a primary consideration for some students, but for others it is not. For others still, race may be the differentiating criterion they use to purposefully distance themselves from other black people. Most students consider a variety of factors when they choose their peers, such as common interests and experiences, propinquity, personality, and other value-based variables. Externally ascribed race values inhibit intragroup and intergroup interactions.

This research is also significant because it shows that being treated differently can be divisive and detrimental. It is noteworthy because it provides educators with insights about how black students feel about race.

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Building a Community of Differences at Bloomfield College

By Estela Mara Bensimon, PhD, Professor and Associate Dean, Rossier School of Education, University of Southern California; Amaury Nora, PhD, Educational Leadership and Cultural Studies, University of Houston; Lisa Patriquin, PhD candidate, University of Southern California; Parker Johnson, PhD candidate, Policy and Organization Analysis, University of Southern California; and Dan Throgmorton, EdD candidate, Educational Leadership, University of Southern California

Introduction and Significance

Between 1989 and 1998 Bloomfield College in Bloomfield, NJ, significantly increased the percentage of minority faculty members from 3% to 25%, which is well above the national average for similar institutions of higher learning. The goal of the research was to offer the Bloomfield College community an assessment of how the college's multicultural mission affects students' learning and development. The study sought to capture students' attitudes about social and academic affairs, multiculturalism, the faculty and its emphasis on using discussion as a learning tool, students' perceptions about possible discriminatory behavior by the faculty, and to obtain a profile of students' mentoring behaviors. The research team conducted seven focus group interviews and one single-subject interview with a cross-section of students, constructed a survey based on the interview responses, and then analyzed the responses from 258 completed surveys.

Findings

Assessments by students of the college's multicultural mission differed between the focus groups and survey results. The majority of students who were interviewed said they had been unaware of Bloomfield's multicultural mission before they enrolled and that it had little to do with their decision to enroll. Students in every focus group, albeit to a varying degree, said that multiculturalism was a laudable goal but felt that it was meant to diversify the student body more than the faculty, administration, or the curriculum. In contrast, students' responses to the survey indicated that they believe that faculty members are, indeed, trying to implement the multicultural mission. African American students perceive that multiculturalism is reflected in social activities on campus, whereas white students are uncertain of this. Native American students to a greater degree than all other ethnic and racial groups believe that the college is committed to diversity.

The students who were interviewed reported that most of their learning about others takes place outside of classrooms and were negative or critical of classroom learning about diversity. Surveys revealed that students have a positive attitude about classroom learning. In focus groups, African American students seemed most concerned

that the curriculum does not address racism in greater depth. White students believe the curriculum favors blacks and disfavors whites; many spoke vigorously about what they perceive as an overemphasis on slavery and questioned why the historical oppression of European immigrant groups is not discussed. Latinos believe that the college's mission has been incompletely realized because they are not significantly represented among the student body nor the faculty. African American and white students share this perception. Most students said that faculty members generally avoid difficult dialogues, such as discussions of race and homosexuality. The surveys, however, revealed that students are neutral on gay and sexual orientation issues. Interviews with faculty in a previous research project support the notion that they have had difficulty controlling or managing confrontations in classes.

A few students in the interviews noted that the curriculum does not stress the academic skills they will need to enter graduate school. The surveys revealed that Native American men are satisfied with the mentoring they have received, but Native American women are apathetic about their experiences. Responses from Asian American men also revealed that they had not experienced either positive or disapproving mentoring experiences. Survey results also showed that all students, with the exception of Asian American women, gave positive ratings to faculty, instruction methodologies, and the curriculum. Native American students, to a greater degree than all other ethnic and racial groups, believe that faculty members are effective teachers.

All focus group participants mentioned occasions when faculty did not acknowledge students' values or opinions. Non-white students in focus groups said that some white faculty talk down to them or have lower expectations for their academic performance. Alternatively, students said that because faculty seem to expect this, when minority students surpass these lower standards, they are singled out for special treatment. Afro-Caribbean and Latino students often have firsthand experience with the faculty's low expectations, particularly with language problems such as a heavy accent or a less-than-native command of English. Non-native English speakers were keenly aware of this. Whereas African Americans often feel unfairly singled out as low achievers or, alternatively, for doing better than a professor might expect, whites feel singled out because they present opinions in class discussions that are not deemed valuable. Survey results, however, show that students do not believe that faculty have low expectations of them and do not report being "talked down" to. In addition, white students to a greater degree than Hispanic and African American students perceive that faculty are more accepting of students in general, do not treat them like high school age students, and believe that students are academically prepared.

Discussion

The focus groups and surveys reveal discrepancies. The interviews portray the majority of students as being critical of the college's multicultural efforts and the faculty's multicultural competencies. They also suggest that the multicultural mission is not

being fulfilled. The survey data do not, however, exhibit this same level of criticism. Students in the focus groups spoke passionately about what they like and do not like about Bloomfield, but the survey data reveal a student body that is neutral or even positive.

The authors believe that both the focus group and survey data are useful. One of the pitfalls of focus groups is that participants are few and their views may not represent the at-large student community. It is possible that students who agreed to participate are those who have the most to complain about. The authors suspect that students' comments are not atypical, and they assume that qualitative studies about diversity, race, and multiculturalism—topics that are still hotly debated in all circles of education—will generate negative energy.

A disadvantage of a survey is that students are forced to choose their responses from a fixed set of options and are not given the opportunity to elaborate. It is possible that the items chosen for the survey do not accurately capture the concerns that students expressed in the focus groups.

Recommendations

The authors believe that the criticisms voiced by students are an indication that it may be time for the college to move to a new phase of its multicultural mission. The college should re-implement mission-driven faculty development on issues of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, gender, and class that focus on intellectual exchange and growth, and pedagogical strategies for class discussions and projects. This may be accomplished in large-group sessions with faculty that explore multidisciplinary perspectives on institutionalized oppression of race, gender, class, sexual orientation, and age and in small-group, interactive sessions on pragmatic techniques for addressing "hot topics" in respectful and intellectually productive ways.

Bloomfield's commitment to diversification must continue to extend to the faculty, especially to those in tenured or tenure-track positions. All students need to see and experience this commitment as a sign of the importance that the college places on its multicultural mission.

The college needs to explain the testing and placement process more carefully to Latino students in order to promote participation, or it may need to overhaul its testing and placement strategies altogether. In addition, given the number of non-native English speakers the college currently supports and intends to recruit, it should assess its commitment to fostering a stronger program of English as a second language.

Co-curricular activities were frequently cited as important, positive sources for exploring and learning about diversity and multiculturalism. The authors recommend that faculty and staff work in teams to explore creative ways to directly connect curricular and other activities in faculty and student development schema.

The student life staff should work with student groups to create a code of respect for the campus community but especially for those who live in residence halls and cannot escape the scrutiny of their peers.

Participation in a Greek organization is a primary reason why students (especially whites) choose to stay at Bloomfield, even when they are disappointed in other aspects of their college experience. It is critical to draw these organizations closer to the goals of the college's multicultural mission.

It is important to search for openly gay students to serve as resident advisors and to provide resident advisors with regular training and opportunities to discuss issues of sexual orientation and sexuality. In addition, the college should explore alternative strategies for assigning students to residence halls. The current mix does not reflect the college's multicultural mission or the diversity of the student body.

Bloomfield may want to actively foster organizations that promote multicultural expressions of identity. Representatives of student organizations may be brought together to build a group whose purpose is to promote cosponsored activities and to engage students in personal explorations of race relations, sexual orientation, and other sensitive issues. The faculty should consider ways to tie in attendance at such events with the goals of the courses they teach.

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Situational Characteristics of Positive and Negative Experiences With Same-Race and Different-Race Students

By Velma Cotton, Doctoral Student, Warren Kelley, MA, Executive Assistant to the Vice President and Director of Planning and Research, and William Sedlacek, PhD, Assistant Director for Test Research and Data Processing, University of Maryland, College Park

Introduction and Significance

While college campuses have become increasingly diverse over the past two decades, theoretically providing the opportunity for an improved and richer multicultural environment, research suggests that such improvements do not occur as naturally as one might think. The authors' primary goals were to (1) better understand the situations in which students have positive and negative racial experiences, and (2) attempt to uncover common characteristics of those situations to help student affairs practitioners foster multiracial interaction among students.

Methods and Analysis

Seventy-five undergraduate students from each major racial group (African American, Latino(a), Asian, white) were randomly selected on the campus of the University of Maryland, College Park. The critical incidents technique was used to answer a series of 13 questions requesting descriptions of specific experiences on and off campus with various racial groups. Response themes were identified, and characteristics of negative and positive situations were examined, which allowed analysis of the characteristics of situations that provide supportive multicultural environments.

Findings

Four themes emerged from the interviews:

The impact of peer communication in academic environments. Students described academic environments as an opportunity to engage in rich dialogue with peers and faculty members of different racial and ethnic backgrounds. Although large classes sometimes presented challenges for interaction, students generally appeared to embrace a safe classroom environment that encouraged discussion. Small-group classroom discussions were especially conducive to interaction among students of different races. If properly facilitated by an instructor, a small-group discussion becomes a safe environment for dialogue about stereotypes, prejudices, differences, and similarities between cultures.

The influence of campus employment. On and off campus employment experiences were frequently mentioned as opportunities to learn about other races in an environment that sponsored growth, accomplishment, and responsibility. In several cases, the experience of striving to achieve common goals in the work setting became the impetus for increased interaction with different racial groups.

Enriching experiences of residential life. In numerous cases, students indicated that living in the residence halls provided extensive opportunities for interaction with students of different races in a nonthreatening environment. Organized activities as well as spontaneous gatherings were the forum for enriching experiences among students.

Opportunities for social interaction. Social activities provided frequent opportunities for positive and negative interactions among racial groups. These activities include on campus events like cultural organization parties and large-scale, campus-wide events within the Stamp Student Union and around campus. Informal activities such as meals, watching movies, and impromptu discussions with peers also provide opportunities for multicultural interaction. While some students regarded large events as opportunities to meet different races, smaller student-organization sponsored events appeared to offer a more relaxed and familiar atmosphere for interaction with students of the same race.

Conclusion

It seems that negative incidents capture much of our attention; while it is legitimate to attend to the incidents, it is important to realize that there are positive interactions occurring all over campus every day. Administrators should not lose sight of this rich ground for promoting better relations. In fact, there are ample opportunities to build upon these interactions and to improve relations among students of various racial and ethnic backgrounds on campus.

Also, student affairs administrators, along with their colleagues, establish to some degree the environment and provide many of the situations that will foster positive cross-cultural interactions. Both the classroom and work settings provide opportunities for faculty and administrators alike to affect these interactions in positive ways. It is incumbent upon educators to understand the power of the academic environment to provide the basis for improving students' social development and positive interactions with others.

Recommendations

- Initiate cooperative efforts with interested faculty to uncover the best practices that have already worked in the classroom and find vehicles to inform and promote their use among other faculty.
- Use the work environment as another key vehicle for promoting better interaction.
- In the social environment, think of ways to create opportunities for students to interact in safe, nonthreatening environments, so that friendships can grow. One-on-one development of understanding is extremely important.
- Understand the nature of the different situations (e.g., classroom environments are more structured; social environments are less structured) and try not to fit them all to the same model.

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Exploring Multiple Social and Cultural Group Statuses

By James M. Croteau, PhD, Associate Professor, Donna M. Talbot, PhD, Associate Professor, and Teresa S. Lance, Doctoral Candidate, Western Michigan University; and Nancy J. Evans, PhD, Associate Professor, Iowa State University

Introduction and Significance

Every individual belongs to multiple social and cultural groups in regard to race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. Little has been articulated in the literature about how multiple social or cultural group statuses affect multicultural experiences. Particularly lacking is the discussion of these multiple statuses when at least one is a "marginalized" status (e.g., being a person of color, a lesbian/gay/bisexual [LGB] person, a female) and one is a "privileged" status (e.g., being white, heterosexual, or male). This study was designed to explore how one social or cultural group status of an individual (e.g., being white) may work in combination with another of the individual's statuses (e.g., being gay) in shaping that person's multicultural experiences.

Methods and Analysis

Packets containing initial recruitment letters and demographic sheets were sent to 187 randomly selected members of three NASPA networks concerned with diversity and multicultural issues. To be eligible for participation, individuals were required to have at least one marginalized status in terms of race, gender, or sexual orientation and at least one privileged status. Interviews were conducted with 18 student affairs professionals who had an interest in multicultural issues. The interview data were analyzed using a constant-comparison method to arrive at a description of the experiences and perspectives of participants.

Findings

Participants discussed a wide variety of experiences related to their multicultural identity development, their understanding of multicultural issues, and social interactions that involve diversity. The authors focused on experiences that were influenced by at least two of an individual participant's statuses (at least one marginalized and at least one privileged). Two broad themes were identified concerning how an individual's privileged and marginalized statuses work together, or "interplay," in shaping that individual's multicultural experiences. First, in the experiences of participants, layering privileged and marginalized statuses changed the value or recognition of those statuses.

Having a privileged status lessened the effects of marginalization, affected the participant's own recognition of marginalization, or affected how others see or accept the participant as part of a marginalized group. For example, socioeconomic and professional statuses were seen as privileges that mitigated oppression and marginalization

for LGB participants. A white lesbian woman believed that because of her color and economic status she and her partner could choose where they were safe to live as a lesbian couple, and they could afford to send their children to schools where harassment for being from a lesbian family was less likely to occur.

Participants reported that the weight, recognition, or value of a marginalized status sometimes affected the weight, recognition, or value of a privileged status. Participants described how having one or more marginalized statuses affected their ability to see themselves, or to be seen by others, as being part of a privileged group. For example, a senior male African American administrator reported that his privileges (in terms of occupational or economic level) were easily dismissed when others viewed him through the lens of race.

The second theme concerned how participants with a privileged status of some kind were able to make connections with people whose status was marginalized. Participants described this connection as being possible due to their own experiences of marginalization along a different status.

Participants frequently said that their own experiences with marginalization led to a general sensitivity toward individuals experiencing other types of marginalization. For example, a white gay man described how, in his youth, others made fun of his sexual orientation. He stated that these experiences made him "more sensitive to individuals ... marginalized" in other ways.

Participants said that they worked to understand the specific experiences of other marginalized groups by consciously translating from their own experiences of marginalization. For example, an African American heterosexual woman described how she reflected upon her experiences as a person of color to help her act more compassionately toward people with a different sexual orientation. In other words, she treated LGBs the way she wanted white people to treat her.

Participants also described the bonding of trust that can occur between people from different marginalized groups, because each has experienced some type of marginalization. For example, one white heterosexual woman explained that "some similarities" across different kinds of oppression make it "a lot easier to connect emotionally ... and intellectually."

Because scholarship considering how privileged and marginalized statuses work in combination with one another is nearly nonexistent, this study's purpose was to provide an initial exploration of this topic. The results that emerged provide some initial language and working concepts that can inform future research and theory as well as influence the multicultural training efforts of student affairs professionals. Although these results may not yet allow for the clear, a priori definition of key variables needed for quantitative inquiry, the result clearly provides preliminary concepts that can be used to advance qualitative inquiry in this area. Consideration of the two broad areas of interplay among social and cultural group statuses can allow a multicultural trainer to think more completely and be better prepared to design experiential activities and facilitate discussions concerning interplay.

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Students' Attitudes Toward Cultural Diversity at the University of Scranton

By Marian Farrell, PhD, Associate Professor of Nursing, University of Scranton; Shirley Adams, PhD, Dean, Dexter Hanley College; Gerald Biberman, PhD, Associate Professor, Chair of Management/Marketing, Robert McKeage, PhD, Associate Professor, Management/Marketing, and Sherman Wooden, Director of Student Activities, University of Scranton

Introduction and Significance

The purpose of the study was to examine students' experiences with diversity and their patterns of interaction at the University of Scranton. The results of the research have been used as a foundation for additional studies.

Methods and Analysis

Students in five focus groups were asked to describe their experiences with cultural diversity. Participants included 3 African Americans, 4 Hispanics, 4 Asian/Pacific Islanders, and 9 Caucasians. Two themes emerged. In general, students participate in activities such as diversity celebrations and use support services such as tutors and writing improvement programs. Changes in the curriculum were seen as positive but insufficient. Students perceived a need for more courses in diversity in all of the university colleges. Participants said they had noticed a lack of cultural and racial diversity among students and faculty alike. Participants said they sought activities and educational experiences that would expose them to different cultures and races in preparation for "real life" and noted that their needs usually were not fully met. Students noted that cultural diversity needed to be addressed in the curriculum and woven into the fabric of life at the university. Several students said that their families are uncomfortable attending campus activities because they stand out and have experienced negative racial remarks. Many students reported instances in which they had overheard derogatory comments or jokes about race, religion, and background.

Conclusions

Several initiatives have emerged on campus as a result of the study. A new position, the Office of Equity and Diversity, was created to deal with diversity issues, and a new director was hired. The Office may recommend that specific diversity training programs be created. A summary of all of the studies completed during the past 18 months will be used as a guide for planning. The university will also adopt strategies to improve enrollment and retention of minority students, and the Committee on Enrollment and Retention has paid more attention to these issues.

The results of the study have been presented at two regional conferences on multicultural affairs and diversity, and the university has also participated in several additional, related studies.

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In-Person Versus Internet Training: A Comparison of Student Attitudes Toward Homosexuality

By Lorraine J. Guth, PhD, Assistant Professor, Indiana University of Pennsylvania; David F. Lopez, PhD, Assistant Professor, Bard College; and Manda S. Fisher, MA, Counselor, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Introduction and Significance

The need for increased awareness, knowledge, and skills in lesbian and gay issues has been clearly documented. Despite attempts to integrate such issues within program curriculum and instruction, students and practitioners have consistently reported a need for increased training in this area. Training interventions designed to change students' negative attitudes and beliefs concerning sexual orientation have produced somewhat inconsistent results. Moreover, no studies have been found that examined the most effective mode of delivery for this educational content. One mode of delivery that is becoming increasingly popular for broadly disseminating information is the Internet. Little is known, however, about the impact of Internet training on students' attitudes toward sexual orientation.

Methods and Analysis

In this short-term, longitudinal study (pre-test, post-test, and follow-up), the authors examined the effects of training in lesbian and gay issues presented in two formats (in-person and Internet). Thirty-eight undergraduate and 49 graduate students participated. The overall sample was 15% men and 85% women. The sample was 86% Caucasian, 5% African American, 3% Asian, 1% Hispanic, and 5% did not answer. The mean age of the sample was 25.85 years (range: 19 years – 56 years).

Participants completed pre-test questionnaires that included the Index of Attitudes Toward Homosexuality (Hudson & Ricketts, 1980), the Homosexuality Attitude Scale (Millham, San Miguel, & Kellog, 1976), Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), Learning-Style Inventory (Kolb, 1985), and computer technology expertise scale. Following pre-tests, participants were randomly assigned to one of three groups (in-person workshop, Internet workshop, and control group). In-person and Internet workshops were 2 hours in length and contained cognitive and affective components that have been suggested for attitude change. Participants completed a post-test immediately following training and a follow-up assessment 3 weeks later.

Stepwise linear regressions were used to assess changes in attitudes from pre-test to post-test and from post-test to follow-up.

Findings

The findings are as follows: (a) Participants in the in-person and Internet workshops had significantly lower levels of homophobia after training, when compared to the control group; (b) increases in positive affect from pre-test to post-test were significantly related to reductions in homophobia; (c) independent of workshop conditions, participants who experienced increased positive affect from post-test to follow-up also evidenced a significant reduction in levels of homophobia; and (d) individual learning styles and computer technology expertise were not significantly related to reductions in homophobia.

Conclusions

These findings have important implications for student affairs professionals who are working to raise student awareness and change attitudes. First, the training workshops used in this study offered numerous opportunities for students to reflect on their experiences and feelings. It was found that increases in positive affect were associated with reductions of homophobia at both post-test and follow-up. This supports Tyler and Guth's (1999) contention that the affective system is the ideal level upon which to have an impact on students' attitudes. Thus, training interventions designed to reduce levels of homophobia should focus on evoking affect.

Second, to the best of the authors' knowledge, this is the first study that has empirically assessed the impact of the Internet as a tool for delivering a workshop in lesbian and gay issues. The authors found that the Internet workshop was equally effective as the in-person workshop. Thus, student affairs professionals can broaden the system of delivery by using the Internet to reach more students.

The present study suggests several directions for future research. First, long-term follow-up assessments need to be conducted to determine if the changes in attitudes remain stable over a longer period of time. Second, the reductions in homophobia are all from self-report measures of attitudes. The nature of this effect should be confirmed with the addition of non-self-report and behavioral measures of homophobia. Third, future research should investigate the influence of increasing the number of training sessions. Increasing the number of training sessions may result in even more dramatic reductions in levels of homophobia.

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Long-Term Effects of Diversity in the Curriculum: Analyzing the Impact of Asian American Studies in the Lives of Alumni From an Urban Commuter University

By Peter Nien-chu Kiang, EdD, Associate Professor, University of Massachusetts, Boston

Introduction and Significance

This study examines how courses in Asian American Studies have influenced alumni of an urban, public commuter university. The study reveals that courses have had significant long-term effects on individuals across racial groups, particularly in their understanding of immigrant experiences, their awareness of racial stereotypes and their own identities in U.S. society, and their ability to interact comfortably with Asian Americans. Unusual but compelling connections between long-term learning from Asian American Studies, perceptions of the university's diversity course requirement, and outcomes for students with learning disabilities are also reported.

Methods and Analysis

Eighty-eight alumni of the University of Massachusetts, Boston (UMass Boston) who graduated between 1988 and 1998 and had taken at least one course in Asian American Studies completed a 19-question survey. Forty-seven percent had taken only one Asian American Studies course; 53% had taken more than one course. Seventy alumni also participated in a 1-hour structured interview. The demographic profile of informants was similar to the composition of UMass Boston Asian American Studies courses.

Findings

Asian American Studies courses have had direct relevance and meaning to alumni in their jobs or careers, continued education, family life, interpersonal relationships, community involvement, and personal identities. Ninety-one percent of respondents said they had gained a better understanding of the immigrant experience, 86% stated that they had a better awareness of racial stereotypes, 65% said that their writing and thinking skills had improved, 70% noted that an Asian American Studies course had enabled them to make friends outside of their race or ethnic group, and 83% indicated that an Asian American Studies course had helped them to interact more comfortably with Asian Americans.

In analyzing the data by race, Asian alumni noted that the impact of becoming more aware of who they are in U.S. society was nearly as powerful as gaining social aware-

ness about the immigrant experience and racial stereotyping. Interestingly, Asian men, far more than Asian women, indicated that their learning had a strong impact on their family life. In contrast, Asian women, far more than Asian men, indicated that their learning from Asian American Studies courses had affected their jobs and careers. These results suggest that Asian American Studies courses not only have long-term effects on the social awareness and identities of Asian alumni but may also contribute to their redefining of gender roles and relationships.

Black and Latino alumni also noted that an Asian American Studies course had influenced their level of social awareness and, to a higher degree than whites, had also influenced their identity. White alumni noted long-term effects on their academic interests, relationships with friends, and level of community involvement. Asians and Latinos, to a higher degree than blacks or whites, indicated that Asian American Studies coursework enabled them to become more aware of their own status in U.S. society and to feel more comfortable speaking up.

Discussion

UMass Boston requires students to take one course each on diversity within and outside of the U.S. in order to graduate. Alumni, including many who took an Asian American Studies course as a way to fulfill the U.S. diversity course requirement, repeatedly stressed the importance of the diversity requirement as a valuable and essential learning opportunity. Furthermore, some Asian alumni revealed that if they had taken an Asian American Studies course earlier in their undergraduate career, they might have chosen a different major.

The authors say that their data reinforce previous research showing that Asian immigrant and refugee students generally choose a major in a technical or business field but expand their major choices when they are exposed to the Asian American Studies curriculum. These findings have significance for curriculum planners and advisors who are in positions to influence students in their course registration and choice of major, particularly during students' first 2 years.

Furthermore, the findings sharply contradict assertions in the national debate over multicultural curriculum reform that ethnic studies courses and programs have divisive and exclusionary effects. Only 2% of survey respondents noted that their experiences in Asian American Studies courses made them feel very isolated from the rest of society, compared with 81% who said this type of effect was little or nonexistent. Similarly, only 6% of survey respondents reported feeling much or very much discouraged or bitter about living in the United States as a result of their Asian American Studies coursework. These patterns held for all racial groups.

The authors also assessed the experiences of alumni of various races with learning disabilities who had taken Asian American Studies courses. The findings clearly show that inclusive pedagogical strategies designed to address the learning needs of immigrant students in the Asian American Studies classroom—when linked with appro-

priate course advising—also have positive, long-term impact for students with learning disabilities. Interviewees highlighted the connections between their struggles with learning disabilities and those of Asian Americans.

Conclusions

A remarkable 94% of the alumni ranked their Asian American Studies courses as either very good or among the best of all the courses they took at UMass Boston. Furthermore, 77% of respondents said they felt significantly more positive about UMass Boston as an institution. Considering the generally weak degree of social and academic integration for students at urban commuter campuses, and given the direction of public higher education institutions to draw increasingly on alumni for financial and political support, the positive associations held by those who took Asian American Studies courses—in some cases more than 10 years ago—represent a valuable resource for the university and its alumni networks to recognize and cultivate.

Many alumni noted that they did not consciously recognize the impact of what they had learned from Asian American Studies courses until they were asked the research questions. However, some alumni interviewed during spring 1999 recalled critical insights about the resettlement of Southeast Asian refugees while they witnessed the recent crisis of ethnic Albanian refugees fleeing Kosovo. In this light, the author suggests that the continuing capacity of alumni to apply lessons and perspectives from their Asian American Studies coursework over time to different contexts, populations, and issues is valuable and urgently needed in our world.

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Becoming a Multiculturally Competent Student Affairs Professional

By Patricia M. King, PhD, Professor, School of Leadership and Policy Studies, Bowling Green State University; and Mary Howard-Hamilton, EdD, Associate Professor and Coordinator, Student Personnel in Higher Education Program, Department of Educational Leadership, Policy Studies and Foundations, University of Florida

Introduction and Significance

Many institutions of higher learning strive to achieve goals related to diversity and multiculturalism. However, the process of achieving diversity goals is often complicated because there is a dearth of knowledge about which attributes students should possess in order to demonstrate cultural competence. In addition, there is little research on how this competence develops. Likewise, it remains unclear which cultural competencies student affairs staff members should demonstrate.

This study was designed to gather baseline data on the multicultural competency levels of graduate students in college student personnel (CSP) programs and of student affairs staff members and to identify the developmental steps leading to multicultural competence. Developing a common language on campus and defining what multicultural competence means for the profession are essential first steps.

Research on how multicultural competence develops is also needed; without this, efforts to educate students on multicultural issues risk being haphazard or misdirected. Student affairs practitioners should be prepared to meet and embrace the challenges presented by demographic shifts in the student population so they can help a wide variety of college students meet their educational and personal goals.

Methods and Analysis

Respondents (CSP master's degree students, staff, and diversity educators) were selected from four campuses in two geographical regions of the United States. Roughly one quarter of participants were people of color. All 132 respondents completed several assessments regarding multicultural competence including:

A background information form (The Multicultural Competency Questionnaire) designed by the authors of this study, including respondents' educational and personal experiences in three areas: multicultural knowledge, skills, and awareness.

A self-assessment survey (The Multicultural Competencies for Student Affairs-Preliminary Form), designed by Pope, Jordan, Stern, & Mueller (1997) to measure the characteristics of a multiculturally competent student affairs professional.

A discussion of a case study in which an advisor was asked to mediate within-group racial/ethnic differences among members of an African American/black student organization regarding programming, activities, and fees.

Focus-group discussion meetings regarding multicultural attributes.

Findings:

Diversity educators scored highest in multicultural competence, followed by student affairs staff members, who scored significantly higher than CSP students. Students of color scored significantly higher than white students.

Respondents in all three groups rated themselves highest for multicultural awareness and lowest for multicultural knowledge.

As for understanding the steps leading to multicultural competence, the transcripts of the case study and focus groups revealed that experts had the highest expectations for what constituted middle and advanced levels of competence, and student affairs staff members had higher expectations than CSP students.

Students of color reported much higher frequency of intercultural contact, although among staff members the results were similar across races.

The research confirms reports that race is a much more salient aspect of identity for people of color than for whites: whereas one third of white participants reported that they thought about their racial/ethnic background relatively infrequently, and only one quarter did so daily, 69% of the participants of color thought about their racial/ethnic background daily.

Conclusions

As President Clinton noted in his televised town meetings in 1998, "Conversations about Race," many Americans are uncomfortable talking about multicultural issues. Our research suggests that many staff members have had more experiences associated with multicultural competence than the students they supervise. Comments shared in the discussion groups suggested that while students are eager to gain more experience and skills in this area, they still feel some discomfort when they are among individuals not like themselves, and they are not sure how to react. Stimulating thoughtful dialogue about multicultural competence may be a way to break down this barrier.

Findings suggest that diversity education experts have much to offer in identifying the steps leading to multicultural competence. It is the role of educators to add

depth and breadth to student understanding of this complex competency and give them better exposure to advanced levels of multicultural knowledge, skills, and awareness.

Faculty and staff members will be better able to educate students about multicultural issues if they can clearly articulate their expectations regarding the knowledge and skills students need to learn and if they have a better understanding of the process leading to multicultural competence. This study attempted to lay a foundation to begin this process.

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Racial Residential Preferences and Segregation: An Application of the Schelling Model Using a University Housing Population

By Gretchen Koehler, MA, Associate Director of Housing for Administration, and John Skvoretz, PhD, Carolina Distinguished Professor of Sociology, University of South Carolina

Introduction and Significance

This research presents two empirical studies and employs a computer simulation program in an application of the Schelling (1969; 1978) model of segregation to the housing residents at the University of South Carolina (USC). As applied to a university housing setting, the Schelling hypothesis states that individuals prefer to live among people similar to themselves and that this simple preference can lead to individual decisions to move, which can result in segregation within a campus housing environment.

Methods and Analysis

The first study used demographic and housing assignment information from current on campus upper-level (beyond the freshman year) students as provided by university databases. In addition, the replies to a question (included in a local USC questionnaire) asking residents to select what mixture (proportion of white and black students) they would prefer to have in their residence halls was also used. The second study used demographic and assignment information from freshmen as provided by university databases. The same question asking residents to select what mixture (proportion of black and white students) they would prefer to have in their residence halls was also used (although this time it was asked as part of a USC component in a nationwide survey). Correlation and regression techniques were applied to the data. Analysis was conducted at an aggregate level in the first study and in the second study at an individual level.

At the aggregate level, analysis examined the correlation between the number of reassignments generated by a residence hall and population composition (i.e., the percentage white or the percentage black with individual residence halls). At the individual level, analysis examined whether or not a specific person requested a reassignment and population composition. In addition, at the individual level, individual student satisfaction with the resident hall was determined by comparing his or her expressed racial preference with the population composition of his or her residence hall.

Findings

The results of the study using data from upper-class residents indicated that in terms of their racial preferences in housing, there was a statistically significant difference between blacks and whites, with black residents preferring larger proportions of whites than did white residents. There was mixed support for the Schelling hypothesis. For white residents the hypothesis was supported: There were fewer per capita requests for reassignment from residence halls with higher proportions of white residents. For black students, the results were the same (fewer per capita requests for reassignment from resident halls with higher proportions of white residents), which is exactly the opposite of Schelling's hypothesis.

The results of the study using data from freshmen showed that they indicated stronger preferences for their own race than did the upper-class residents and that there was a statistically significant difference between blacks and whites in terms of their racial preferences in housing, with black residents again preferring larger proportions of whites than did white residents. This study offered even less support for the Schelling hypothesis; requests for reassignment appeared to be unrelated to the proportion of white and black residents in a residence hall. Individual level analysis revealed that black students are more dissatisfied with their residence hall assignments despite having more tolerant preferences.

Overall, the empirical studies indicate that while black and white students may have very different preferences for the proportion of black and white students in their campus housing, these preferences do not seem to dictate their decisions to request reassignment.

The third component of this research employed a computer simulation model (written in Microsoft QuickBasic), which can be used as a diagnostic and planning tool. The model can be used to assess how student movement among various housing areas is influenced if the request for reassignment is driven only by residents' preferences for racial composition and the population composition of their current housing assignment. The computer program simulates a housing environment in which there are 20 residence halls of various sizes. The user selects the system-wide capacities, the proportion of majority/minority students within the housing environment, and the racial composition preferences of the residents. The initial assignment of residents to the residence halls is done randomly with residents assigned a preference in accordance with the user specifications. At each iteration of the program, residents are randomly selected, and if they are unhappy with their current residence area (i.e., if their racial preference does not match that of their assigned area), they are reassigned to the first other area with a more preferred population composition that has a vacancy for them. The user controls the number of iterations, and at the end of each iteration the program reports the distribution of majority and minority residents in each of the housing areas and the occupancy rate in each of the areas. It also reports the percentage of majority and minority residents in each area who are "happy" (i.e., whose preferences have been matched).

The results of the computer simulations, of how movement of housing residents from one residence hall to another might be affected if racial composition preferences of individuals did drive reassignment requests, produced four generalizations about how segregation processes may occur. First, the simulations indicated that while occupancy rate affects the percent of both majority and minority residents who are eventually happy, it had a greater impact on the minority residents. Occupancy rate was also found to affect the speed of the segregation process; rates near capacity tended to slow down the process.

Results of the simulation also indicated that increasing the maximum tolerance ratio (i.e., the preference for a population composition with a higher proportion of the opposite race) has little effect on the eventual emergence of segregation through housing reassignments.

Finally, the results also indicate that as those residents who are living in a housing area that does not match their preference level are reassigned in an effort to provide more comfortable circumstances for them, those minority residents who remain may face a situation in which they are an increasingly smaller proportion, and hence, they, too, may seek reassignment. Thus, even a few discontented residents may drive the segregation process.

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Assessment of the Cultural Climate in a University Setting

By R. Eric Landrum, PhD, Associate Professor and Department Chair, Ronna J. Dillinger, Student, and Elizabeth A. Vandernoot, Student, Boise State University

Introduction and Significance

Universities have become more racially diverse in the past 10 years. Much of the existing literature on this subject addresses the college community's understanding of diversity and how attitudes can be changed, but there is surprisingly little research on the measurement of attitudes. This study attempts to measure those attitudes. Learning about students' perceptions can be important, because the beliefs held by students and educators may be vastly different. Understanding these differences in perceptions fosters better communication between groups and benefits the entire campus.

Methods and Analysis

The goals of this study were to refine and improve the Campus Diversity Questionnaire (CDQ); administer the revised questionnaire (CDQ-R) to a national audience; develop meaningful generalizations; collect a baseline of campus diversity data that might be useful to universities; and create a national database of information so that institutions can compare their measures with those of other institutions.

Twenty-three members of the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities were asked to collaborate in the project; 10 agreed to do so.

Participants were queried about their gender, age, current class standing, and race. They were also asked to respond to 23 statements using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). A total of 1,922 undergraduate students completed useable surveys.

Data collection responsibilities were left to individual campuses. Although survey procedures varied from campus to campus, the overarching goal was to develop a national database of information on campus diversity concerns. In general, students were able to complete the survey in about 15 minutes.

Findings

In general, students agreed that diversity promotes personal growth and a healthy society, strengthens communities and workplaces, and enriches the educational experience. Students generally had not encountered racial discrimination on their campus, were unaware of their university's diversity plan, and thought that the new-stu-

dent orientation adequately addresses multicultural diversity. There was substantial agreement among all students on 16 of the 23 statements. The statements to which participants neither agreed nor disagreed included those about their university actively promoting diversity, the core curriculum requiring courses in multicultural diversity, and faculty sensitivity to diversity issues.

Significant campus differences emerged on 20 of 23 questions. This finding underscores the importance of studying diversity issues on more than one campus and that these studies should be conducted in a multi-institutional, collaborative effort. Studies on a single campus, however well they are designed, will provide only limited, general information about college students' attitudes on diversity.

Significant gender differences emerged in 12 of the 23 questions. An initial examination of responses reveals that females may be more aware of racial conflicts on campus than males and tend to recognize, value, and appreciate diversity efforts more than males do.

In general, students 25 and older tended to agree more with statements that addressed the value of diversity, especially its role in education.

Significant differences emerged among freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior undergraduates on 15 of the 23 survey statements. Juniors and seniors have probably seen more discrimination on campus, but they place a significantly higher value on diversity. Responses by freshmen and sophomores indicate that, because they are earlier in their academic careers, they may be more naïve about race relations.

The CDQ-R appears to be particularly sensitive to differences among racial groups. Every statement on the survey exhibited a statistically significant difference across racial groups. Black students tended to agree less, and often significantly less, with other racial groups, and it seems clear that black students have a significantly different picture of racial relations on campus.

An analysis of the responses indicates that American Indian/Alaska Native students may be having more difficulty with social interactions on campus and appear to value diversity less than other racial groups do.

White students clearly have different perceptions about diversity from other racial groups. They tend to see less value in diversity and know less about diversity efforts on campus, which could be because they have experienced less racial discrimination.

Conclusions

Seventy percent or more of all undergraduate students in this study said they placed a high value on diversity: for enriching their educational experience, for personal growth and a healthy society, to strengthen the communities and workplaces, and to enhance America's competitiveness. A closer examination of the survey responses by institution, gender, age, year in school, and race indicates complex relationships and differences between and among groups on diversity issues.

A number of institutional differences appeared on the survey responses, which indicates the individual and idiosyncratic nature of each college campus. The CDQ-R is a reliable and valid instrument. Perhaps over time, and with systematic study, the study of diversity will become more understandable with the use of instruments such as the CDQ-R.

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The Multicultural Climate at the University of Texas at Austin

By Richard M. Lee, PhD, Assistant Professor of Education Psychology, University of Texas at Austin

Introduction and Significance

The University of Texas at Austin was ordered to eliminate affirmative action policies and programs by the Texas Attorney General in 1996. The minority enrollment immediately dropped, and the university lost minority scholarships and retention programs. There has also been concern that the campus has grown hostile to minority students, many of whom say they feel marginalized and isolated. Given this concern, the author examined the effect of multiculturalism on college adjustment at the university.

Success in college requires an open and supportive campus atmosphere that allows a student to establish intellectually challenging relationships with faculty and peers. When an institution fosters a spirit of community among students, it also fosters intellectual development and lower levels of stress. But a negative campus environment can lead to academic under-performance or intellectual disengagement from learning altogether. It is critical, then, that students find ways to connect to their campus.

The elimination of affirmative action now means that students of color no longer have university-sanctioned support networks to assist in their transition and adjustment to college, which leads to greater alienation and isolation. A lack of institutional programs and support, combined with negative attitudes by some white students, can have a negative effect on student recruitment, retention, and success. The loss of affirmative action will also affect white students, because they will not be exposed to the heterogeneity that is critical to success in an increasingly global society.

To succeed in college, minority students often rely on their own psychological resources such as self-esteem, past multicultural experiences, a secure ethnic identity, and an openness to diversity and educational challenge. Students with high self-esteem perceive less discrimination and generally perform better in school. Students who have a secure ethnic identity and who engage in race-specific activities also have higher self-esteem and adjust better.

Methods and Analysis

The author examined the current state of the multicultural campus climate at the University of Texas at Austin. In addition, he sought to understand how the climate affects the social and academic adjustment of students of color and to compare those

findings with adjustment by white students. To understand these issues, he tested for differences in perception of multiculturalism between racial minorities and majorities. He also conducted separate analyses of minority and majority student responses to identify how multiculturalism may contribute to students' academic and social adjustment, above and beyond the contributions of personal, psychological resources.

He surveyed 405 undergraduate students; slightly less than half were racial minorities. The sample was representative of the undergraduate population at large, which is estimated to be 65% white, 14% Hispanic, 13% Asian American, and 4% African American. The survey used self-report inventories to measure personal and social resources, such as self-esteem, past multicultural experience, ethnic or racial identity, general racial attitudes, and openness to diversity and challenge. It also contained questions to measure cultural attitudes and social and academic adjustment.

Findings

Results suggest that white students perceive a positive multicultural climate, whereas students of color are neutral in their perceptions. African Americans reported a stronger ethnic identity and lower color-blind racial attitudes than all other groups. They also reported higher perceptions of racial tension, racial pressures, and unfair treatment. Asian Americans also reported a stronger ethnic identity than whites and higher perceptions of racial pressure.

Perceptions of the overall multicultural campus climate appear to be slightly positive, although students of color are significantly more neutral in their appraisal. White students, however, slightly to moderately agreed that the campus climate is positive. One exception is the degree to which students make personal, proactive efforts to promote diversity on campus. On this matter, students of color make a significantly greater effort than white students do. Ironically, it appears white students benefit the most from their own efforts to understand and promote diversity. It also appears that, despite the greater perceptions of racial tension on campus, students of color feel that they are relatively safe and comfortable on campus and are treated fairly by staff, faculty, and other students.

The discrepancy between how whites and people of color view the multicultural campus climate is not completely surprising. The majority status of whites, their position in society, and their tendency to view the world as color-blind explain their rosier perceptions of campus life. Given this view of the campus, it is equally understandable that they make less of an effort to promote diversity. However, students of color, particularly African Americans, are less enthusiastic about the status of the multicultural campus.

The results suggest that white students may be racially aware, but they are not as disturbed as minorities are by racial tensions, and they do not exert as much effort to address racial problems. Students of color are affected by the multicultural campus climate, even though they generally view the climate as neutral or slightly positive.

Students of color specifically benefit from a campus that receives them in a supportive and open fashion. How students of color perceive the climate can also be understood from a perspective of stress and coping. That is, a positive, multicultural climate provides students of color with more resources to help them adjust socially and academically to college life.

White students who clearly identify with their majority status reported a greater sense of belonging and overall college satisfaction. They also seem to benefit when they make proactive efforts to understand and promote diversity on campus. It may be that white students who are more racially proactive have a more internalized racial identity that allows them to see the mutual benefits of a race-friendly society. Their appreciation of diversity reflects their ability to see things from multiple perspectives and allows them to incorporate new ideas into their lives.

Discussion

The results from this study suggest that student affairs professionals must continue to develop and implement diversity training programs. Such programs typically challenge college students to better understand and actively promote diversity in their lives. As this study has shown, diversity awareness significantly contributes to overall college adjustment, particularly for white students. The programs may also promote greater interracial comfort and safety for students of color who may otherwise feel isolated. One of the problems with diversity training, however, is that it often preaches to the choir; as a result, such training is less likely to change the greater multicultural campus climate.

Student affairs administrators should work more closely with ethnic-specific organizations, particularly in the wake of the loss of affirmative action. For minority students, ethnic identity and self-esteem, in addition to safety and comfort, must be nurtured. Another strategy is to develop avenues for majority white student organizations to associate with ethnic-specific organizations. This alliance would encourage diversity awareness among white students and a feeling of safety and comfort among minority students.

This study represents in many ways only the tip of the iceberg in understanding the new multicultural climate at the University of Texas at Austin. There needs to be a systematic study of the longer-term effects of the multicultural climate on college students, particularly in academic success and retention. Researchers must also identify other appropriate measures of campus climate and college adjustment to better understand these relationships. For example, there is a need for a reliable and valid measure of student attitudes and perceptions about the elimination of affirmative action on university campuses. These lines of future research should include larger samples of racial minority groups, notably African Americans and Hispanics, to allow for more appropriate racial group comparisons.

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The Effects of Students' Backgrounds and College Experiences on Their Patterns of Interaction and Acceptance and Appreciation of Diversity

By Gary R. Pike, PhD, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs and Director, Student Life Studies, University of Missouri-Columbia

Introduction and Significance

Americans take for granted that higher education can and should play a key role in developing students' abilities to function effectively in a diverse society. While there is evidence that college experiences do influence students' openness to diversity, relatively little is known about the effects of specific college experiences on acceptance and appreciation of diversity.

Previous research in this area suggests that a variety of factors, such as students' backgrounds, the nature of the college environment, and students' involvement and effort during college, all combine to influence learning and personal development, including how effectively students function among diverse groups of people. The author sought to further examine the relationship between students' backgrounds, college experiences, and their abilities to function effectively in a diverse society and the impact of a rich and varied college experience on students' openness to diversity, personal development, and critical thinking.

Method and Analysis

The author conducted an analysis of information about college freshman at the University of Missouri-Columbia (MU), an institution which has made a concerted effort to increase the diversity of its undergraduate student population. The research population for this study was 3,841 first-time college (FTC) students who enrolled at MU during the fall 1998 semester.

The author examined how background, college residence, and social environment contributed to three abilities related to effective functioning in a diverse society: openness to diversity, personal development, and critical thinking. Two methods of data collection were used. A sample of FTC students attending MU's summer orientation program was asked to complete the Cooperative Research Program (CRP) freshman survey. Another survey, the College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ), was also completed by a sample of MU students.

Findings

For all three outcome measures (openness to diversity, personal development, and critical thinking), the contributions of college environment and involvement were substantially greater than the effects of background characteristics.

The following factors had a positive effect on openness to diversity: living on campus, particularly membership in a residential learning community; being a member of a minority group (being a minority student was also indirectly related to gains in personal development and critical thinking); humanitarian and civic involvement; and student involvement, specifically, the quality of effort in personal experiences, student acquaintances, and topics of conversations.

Positive social involvement and interaction with diverse groups of students and faculty significantly increased learning.

Students' campus residence and their levels of involvement in campus life had significant effects on all three measures of diversity outcomes.

Being female was directly related to several variables. Gender had an effect on gains in personal development. However, the total effects of gender on openness to diversity and gains in critical thinking were not statistically significant.

Conclusions

These results suggest that the greatest gains in diversity education are achieved when institutions intentionally structure college experiences to promote high levels of in class and out of class interaction and involvement. For example, living on campus, especially in residential learning communities, can foster openness to diversity. While student backgrounds play a role, the research suggests that students' college experiences may be even more important than their backgrounds in determining openness to diversity. The author found that involvement measures—especially the quality of student relationships—were the strongest predictors of diversity outcomes, suggesting that promoting greater student involvement in campus life could cultivate greater acceptance and appreciation of diversity. The research suggests that other strategies for improving openness to diversity on campus and helping students function at higher levels in a diverse society would be to encourage students to build positive relationships and create opportunities for diverse groups of students to work and live together.

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Perceptions of Diversity: Racial and Cultural Diversity as Perceived by Students in a Community College

By Margaret Sprague, EEO/Affirmative Action Officer; and Luba Chliwniak, PhD, Pima County Community College District, Tucson, Arizona

Community colleges preceded universities in achieving diversity within their student bodies and addressing enrollment management issues related to pluralistic student populations. Their diligence in recruiting students from segments of the population that had not previously attended college yielded sizable increases in college attendance by ethnic minorities. By the end of the 1970s, community colleges were enrolling nearly 40% of all ethnic minority students attending college in the U.S. Today, the student population in community colleges tends to reflect the ethnic population of the surrounding community to a greater extent than in universities.

Methods and Analysis

The study addresses three major questions:

1. How do community college students perceive campus diversity and plurality?
2. What campus experiences help shape these perceptions?
3. Are personal characteristics, such as age, gender, and/or ethnic background, associated with differences in perceptions of diversity and community?

The study was carried out on the West Campus of Pima Community College, which has a diverse student population and is reflective of the community it serves. Data for 1997 indicate that 4% of Pima students are African American, 4% are Asian American, 28% are Hispanic, 3% are Native American, and 55% are female. Approximately 8% state that they have a disability.

Originally, the authors intended to focus on perceptions of racial and ethnic diversity. However, as they developed and refined the survey instrument, questions arose about culture, perceptions of social class, individuals with disabilities, and other issues, and they decided to include them as well. After conducting a small pilot survey, they distributed 400 survey questionnaires over a 10-week period in 1998. The questionnaires were made available in classrooms, in meeting places of student organizations, in lounge and cafeteria seating areas, and to sports teams. Completed questionnaires were returned by 184 students.

Findings

Detailed analysis of the survey data leads the authors to conclude that discussion about diversity needs to shift away from being framed in terms of race and individual attributes. Instead, discussions should proceed more in terms of institutional culture, climate, and effort. Findings suggest that minority group members and individuals under the age of 25 no longer view students as "typical" or "atypical." In contrast,

older students—who are returning to college campuses in greater numbers—often view themselves as "atypical" and seek support services particular to their needs.

These were only two among many generational differences that were discovered. Students under 25, as well as members of minority groups, were more likely to express concerns over whether their institution was providing an environment conducive to differing points of view and cultures, welcoming all who attend. When asked to identify elements of campus life that were important to achieving diversity, younger students found fewer elements that they considered important than did older students. The explanation can be found partly in intergenerational differences in perception of minority status. Students under 25 were less likely to assign "minority" status to a racial group, individuals with disabilities, veterans, women, low-income groups, welfare recipients, or the homeless. In a particularly striking example, only 45.8% of those under 25 considered blacks to be a minority group, compared with 54.1% of those 25-39 and 57.5 percent of those 40 and older.

Other important findings include:

- The top five factors in creating a diverse workplace: immediate correction of discriminatory practices (82%), job accommodations for individuals with disabilities (76%), diverse supervisors, diverse workers, and variety of work schedules (54% each).
- Factors important in creating a diverse community college: services for special populations (82%); variety of classes (73%), variety of teaching and assessment methods (64%), diverse instructors (63%), and diverse counselors (62%). Diverse students ranked sixth, with 58% of respondents identifying this item as "very important."
- When asked to identify those whom they identify as "minority" or "diverse," and then to identify those who should receive special consideration or services on campus, 51% selected the physically disabled and 46% selected the learning disabled, and 74% and 68%, respectively, said they should receive special treatment. In contrast, only about 50% of students overall said that people of color were members of minority groups, and a mere 20% said they needed special treatment.

Conclusions

Several outcomes of this research appear to contradict conventional wisdom. For example, although the majority of respondents indicate that diversity of faculty is helpful to learning, none expressed this in terms of having positive role models. The most frequent reasons cited for an appreciation of diversity in faculty include the ability to gain insights into ethnic, race, and gender issues, as well as experiences and backgrounds of those who are older.

These findings, if validated through expanded studies, may have broad implications for the design of student development programs in community colleges.

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The Voice Project: Encountering Diversity in Student Affairs Graduate Preparation (In Progress)

By Carney Strange, PhD, Professor, Bowling Green State University

A unique strategy, known as the Voice Project, is being used to engage a group of 30 student affairs graduate students over a 2-year period to explore human differences, to develop skills in understanding and working with diverse and underrepresented populations in higher education, and to assess the project's value as a multicultural curriculum intervention model.

American higher education faces the challenge of helping students from a variety of backgrounds come to terms with boundaries of gender, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, and religious beliefs. This Voice Project is examining the implementation and outcomes of a transformed teaching strategy designed to instill an understanding and appreciation for human differences in the context of a student affairs graduate preparation curriculum. The goal for the Voice Project is to begin to develop a "habitual instinct toward empathy" (Strange, 1995) among graduate students in preparation for their entry into a multicultural society. The Voice Project has been applied to single courses in a student affairs graduate preparation program; this research project, however, entails a systematic and integrative infusion across a 2-year curriculum leading to the master's degree in College Student Personnel. Participants are full-time students at Bowling Green State University who will complete the master's degree program by May or August 2000.

At the core of the Voice Project is the challenge for participants to actively seek out alternative "voices" and to assure that these voices are heard and understood as part of the discussion of course content and interaction with class colleagues. For example, a Caucasian female may choose the voice of a Black male, a heterosexual male may take on the voice of a lesbian, and a Latino (male) may take on the voice of a Latina (female). Students develop expertise in their chosen voice by examining literature, personal contacts, observing the behavior of individuals who live that voice, and/or interviewing people who speak in that voice. In each term, participants are asked to select a voice other than their own and different from the voice they selected in any of the previous terms.

Two types of data are being collected. Primary data, qualitative in nature, are gathered through participants' journal entries and class observations. Also, at regular intervals,

participants engage in discussion sessions where they speak from the perspective of their voice; these data will be recorded and transcribed for analysis.

This project began in June 1998 and will be completed in June 2000.

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How Interaction Patterns Among Resident Assistants and Residents Promote Diversity and Connectedness at a Midwestern University

By Steven J. Tyrell, MA, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, and Julie Crowl, graduate student, Rhetorical & Technical Communication, Michigan Technological University

Introduction and Significance

This study explores interaction patterns among residents and resident assistants (RAs) in the residence halls at a Midwestern university. In particular, the authors examined how the speech patterns of RAs affect their ability to promote the concept of connectedness or community among the residents they supervise. They also examined how RAs, who are underrepresented in the student population, associate identity development and connectedness.

Methods and Analysis

The research took place over 4 years in five residence halls that house more than 2,100 students. The data were drawn from a 3-year experiment (Project Rise) and from a 1-year research project in which RAs and residents reported their interactions in journals and participated in focus groups or in one-to-one interviews or both.

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used for the study. The quantitative method involved making basic calculations of interaction points between residents and their RAs from journals that residents completed. The qualitative method, in the form of focus groups and interviews, served as an opportunity to engage residents and for RAs to tell their stories.

Potential participants were randomly selected from a computer-generated list of students from seven groups. Sixteen students completed the training and 14 participated in all three segments. The 14 subjects included African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, and Caucasians, some of whom reported their home of record as in the Upper Peninsula. Males and females were equally represented.

Findings

The results from Project Rise pointed to the importance of studying connectedness among underrepresented students living in residence halls. Connectedness as described by underrepresented students did not seem to have the same meaning as it did for white students.

The authors examined referrals, RAs listening to residents, and how the concept of RA-as-initiator or agent can be detrimental to residents' perceptions. The discussion of language use by RAs showed how their use of verbs and pronouns can define how they perceive their role as an RA and their relationships with residents. RAs are being authoritative when they use verbs such as told, made, ordered, and jumped on, whereas they are being respectful when they use such verbs as requested, guided, encouraged, informed, and shared. Pronouns can also create distance between people, depending on how they are used. Distancing appears in the use by residents of the pronouns us and we, versus they and everyone else.

The RA journals reflected a pattern of verb usage that paralleled their residents' descriptions of how RAs interacted with them. Residents indicated that they were more likely to continue to interact with an RA who "helped" them rather than "told" them what to do. Thus, in August 1997, the authors added a new category, Listening, to the RA journals.

A comparative analysis of RAs' speech and their interaction with residents showed a pattern that was strongly correlated between RAs' reported speech in their journals and focus groups with residents. The authors developed four categories to represent shifts in RA communication: disconnected (low discipline/low relationship), authoritative (high discipline/low relationship), community initiator (low discipline/high relationship), and community developer (high discipline/high relationship).

A prominent feature that emerged in focus groups with African Americans was pronoun use and feelings of solidarity and distancing. Solidarity focuses the analysis of pronoun use on how people empower themselves in a way that separates them from others. African Americans described themselves as being singled out and treated differently and more unfairly than their white counterparts, when community standards were enforced. African Americans' use of us and we appeared to signify their lack of connectedness to the other residents.

Discussion

The authors believe that it is important to train RAs to analyze their own speech patterns, which may have either positive or negative connotations with residents. It is also important to train RAs to think about the implications of the verbs and pronouns they use. Professional staff members may wish to coach RAs on their use of authoritative and nonauthoritative verbs that may be appropriate and under what conditions. How RAs characterize their interactions with residents may also reflect their ability to foster community development, which in turn can influence student retention.

The authors conclude that there is a need for RA training to continue focusing on active listening from the traditional confrontation/assertiveness standpoint and also for building rapport and trust with their residents. Active listening can contribute to the creation of "connectedness" in a residence hall.

Professional staff members argue that they need to have a balance of personalities among RAs on their staff. When RA communication and interaction with residents is disrespectful, unfair, or disconnected, they may help balance out the RA staff, but their communication methods can be detrimental to residents' education. For the common phrase in RA job descriptions of "strong interpersonal skills required" to be meaningful, RAs need to recognize the kinds of communication they use in the residence hall.

Training RAs in communication has reduced the amount of harmful and hurtful speech during the 4 years of this research, but it has not eliminated it. The journals gave RAs and their supervisors a way to monitor RA communication. By using sociolinguistics and critical discourse analysis, RAs and supervisors can intervene in problematic RA communication.

The model of RA speech type that emerged during our research also points to the need for RAs to develop rapport and trust with their residents. RAs can help residents feel either welcome or alienated. The community developer speech type is not ideal, but it can be learned and practiced.

The authors reaffirm the profession's belief that RAs need training to explore student development theories. Although RAs may not be able to apply such theories themselves, the use of multiple student development models in RA communication strategies is realistic on two counts: first, communication strategies can readily bring theory into application, and second, the need to engage in multiple student development theories reflects the true complexity of the world around us. Professional staff would also benefit from learning about ethnic identity development models, because they need to understand the ethnic identity transitions that residents experience and how those transitions can affect the quality of life and connectedness in residence halls. In addition, understanding ethnic identity development of underrepresented students may help RAs and residence-life professionals learn and understand where intragroup and intergroup activities converge or conflict with community development efforts.

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Analyzing a Culturally Diverse Collective Learning Experience for Undergraduates

By Olufemi Vaughan, PhD, Associate Professor, African Studies and History, State University of New York, Stony Brook

Introduction and Significance

In an effort to promote intercultural learning and understanding among Stony Brook's diverse undergraduate students, this project supported seminars, panel discussions, and cultural events and assisted in the revitalization of foreign language halls. The author sought to analyze the significance of a culturally diverse collective learning experience for undergraduates.

Methods and Analysis

The research was drawn from a sample of students from various ethnic interest organizations enrolled at Stimson College, a unit of the State University of New York, Stony Brook, and the International Studies minor. Three types of informal forums were observed where participants from 16 ethnic interest organizations interacted:

Interdisciplinary international studies seminars. Ten seminars were conducted during the 1998-99 academic year for approximately 100 students of diverse cultural backgrounds and from various ethnic interest groups and academic departments.

Panel discussions. Ten panel discussions for various university ethnic and international groups were completed, in which issues such as immigration, race relations, gender relations, patriarchy, religious conflicts, sexuality, and globalization were analyzed.

Language halls. Stimson College's language program, which provides undergraduates of diverse cultural backgrounds with qualified language tutors in French, Spanish, and Mandarin, were integrated with the teaching of diverse cultural experiences of various regions.

In order to encourage serious intellectual discussions among the participants, formal research procedures were carefully integrated into the academic sessions. Focus-group research and random questioning was conducted in impromptu sessions throughout the academic year; these groups examined the role of the ethnic organizations and Stimson seminars on participants' attitudes on cross-cultural interactions.

Findings

The most important student interactions were expressed in informal social networks that validated their immediate cultural experience. The results of our focus-group

research revealed that students have limited social and intellectual interactions outside their immediate cultural groups. The author also found that the college's international studies seminars, panel discussions and foreign language tutorials are successful methods of enhancing cross-cultural and social interactions among participants.

These are some of the more salient results:

A significant percentage of the participants (79%) revealed that membership in ethnic interest clubs does not necessarily encourage intellectual interactions with students of other ethnic groups.

Because ethnic interest groups generally emphasize group interaction (83%), they inevitably inhibit cross-cultural interactions among students of diverse ethnic experiences (74%).

Ethnic interest organizations are not reliable networks of informal academic interaction among students (73%).

Over three-quarters of participants (81%) claim that while their ethnic clubs sustain a feeling of camaraderie among members, the intellectual development of students is confined to the university's academic program.

The vast majority of participants (86%) generally noted that Stimson's international studies seminars, panel discussions, and language halls are important avenues for social and intellectual interactions.

Conclusions

The author found that the interdisciplinary seminars encouraged dynamic interaction among students, teachers, and other individuals on campus and encouraged students to develop analytical methods of reasoning on diversity and global issues. The collective learning experiences encouraged participants to recognize that the objective of a liberal arts education is not to find superficial solutions to complex problems but, rather, to appreciate the nature of human behavior and the dynamic interactions among communities, social movements, and modern state institutions.

These initiatives have encouraged the creation of a new international studies curriculum and a vibrant multicultural environment at Stimson College by emphasizing an interdisciplinary approach that integrates mainstream academic disciplines into an informal learning environment. The seminars and discussion panels expanded the intellectual scope and the multicultural mission of Stimson College, further enhancing Stimson's reputation as an important center for cross-cultural learning and social interaction on our campus.

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Winning Through Diversity: Lessons from Intercollegiate Athletics in Creating Community from Difference.

By Lisa E. Wolf-Wendel, PhD, Assistant Professor, University of Kansas; J. Douglas Toma, PhD, Assistant Professor, University of Missouri; and Christopher C. Morphew, PhD, Assistant Professor, University of Kansas

Introduction and Significance

In general, colleges and universities have made significant progress in broadening access to members of diverse populations who were previously excluded from their campuses. Yet, improving access alone is insufficient; achieving diversity without community represents a lost opportunity for everyone. However, the process of building community out of difference is more complex and gradual than it is simple and dramatic.

Student-athletes in the highest profile intercollegiate sports at the largest and most prominent institutions are a much more diverse group than college students as a whole. Specifically, people of color are often a majority in football, men's basketball, women's basketball, and men's and women's track and field, turning the racial mix typical at most colleges and universities on its head. Although people of color and women continue to be underrepresented as coaches and sports administrators, representation in those positions is still often better than it is among faculty and staff elsewhere in the institution.

Methods and Analysis

The authors focused on the five intercollegiate sports that generally have pronounced racial and ethnic student diversity: football, men's and women's basketball, and men's and women's track and field. They used purposive sampling to identify five different campuses that represent the different types of universities that compete in Division I, the highest and most visible level of intercollegiate athletics. Their two-person teams visited each campus for 2 or 3 days each and gathered data through interviews, focus groups, document review, and observation. On each campus the authors conducted between 12–15 formal interviews or focus groups involving between 50 and 100 individuals. They made a special effort to include women administrators and Native American, Hispanic, and Asian American student-athletes, persons traditionally underrepresented in intercollegiate athletics.

Findings

The authors found that remarkably strong bonds linked together student-athletes, coaches, and athletics administrators, creating communities that transcend such differences as race, socioeconomic status, and geographic background.

Members of teams share a common, significant goal—to win—which helps to develop community. The goal of winning brings together even the most diverse individuals. Agreement on this point was strong across sports and schools and among students, coaches, and administrators. Also, individual goals and team goals were typically complementary rather than contradictory. This was true even in track and field, a sport that emphasizes individual excellence.

Frequent interaction builds community. The great amount of time athletes spent during the academic year with peers from diverse backgrounds helps them to know people as individuals, to see beyond stereotypes, and to build community. In addition, most student-athletes were exposed at an early age to other athletes from diverse backgrounds through teams that were often more diverse than the other social settings open to young people.

Creating community is enhanced through the shared adversity of hard work, suffering, and sacrifice. Respondents talked about building community through shared adversity and employed two metaphors with great frequency: family ("going through hard times together") and war ("suffering so much that you had to lean on each other to make it through to victory").

Having a common enemy helps to create community. Having a common "enemy" (the "us versus them" phenomenon) helped to bond student-athletes with their teammates. While coaches and rival teams were often described as the "enemy," it was far more common for student-athletes to see student non-athletes as rivals or the enemy, a tension promoted by (as one student-athlete put it) "this whole scholarship thing."

Athletes build community by supporting and helping each other, which builds trust and respect. Athletes disagreed about the extent to which they need to like each other; some believed that, while you could "hate your teammates," you still had to trust and respect them in order to work together to win. This mutual support seems to occur both off and on the playing field.

Athletics is a meritocracy: What matters is how well you perform, not who you are. This agreed-upon value promotes community because it diminishes the importance of differences among teammates. Coaches and student-athletes argued that the objective nature of sports was its greatest attribute for combating differences among teammates.

There is a high degree of accountability in athletics. The high level of accountability to perform forces student-athletes to do whatever it takes to "get the job done" as part of a winning team. Student-athletes are compensated by athletic scholarships; hence, if they fail to perform in college, on or off the field, they could find themselves "unemployed."

Coaches guide their teams to be successful and to work together. The relationship between a coach and his or her student-athletes is different from that of any other faculty-student relationship. Coaches facilitate teamwork and build community by helping athletes solve problems and overcome disagreements with teammates, even while making individual athletes understand that they are important.

Limitations to building community include the response to homosexuality. Sexual orientation remains a complex, potentially divisive issue in athletics. Students and coaches gave mixed responses with regard to having gay or lesbian teammates: Some sidestepped the question, while others insisted it was a non-issue in their sport. Clearly, some coaches and student-athletes are still not ready to confront and deal with sexual orientation.

Further limitations to building community appear in the lack of diversity within the staff. Athletic departments are still not as diverse as their teams. Nevertheless, most coaches, athletes, and administrators recognized that women and minority coaches, with their unique perspectives and talents, may play a critical role in the development of student-athletes and teams. Arguing that athletic departments were indeed changing, white males were more likely to cite Title IX and the growing number of women and minority coaches and administrators; on the other hand, women and minority coaches and administrators were more likely to note the discrepancy between the number of women and minority athletes as opposed to the number of women and minority coaches.

Conclusions

The authors knew at the beginning of their study that the composition of athletic teams was diverse: i.e., access by students from underrepresented populations was no longer an issue in intercollegiate athletics. As for climate, they found that teams were particularly successful in integrating students from a vast array of backgrounds into a coherent whole. Student-athletes blend into teams where factors such as race, socioeconomic status, and geographic diversity mean much less than the particular contributions those athletes make to the teams' common goals. In addition, these difference factors become less significant in intercollegiate athletics because of the community building that people in athletics work very hard to achieve.

In their efforts to enhance campus-wide diversity and community, academic and student affairs leaders can look to intercollegiate athletics for positive ways to build strength from difference. For example, campuses need to find common, significant goals that are shared by students. They need to find ways to encourage diverse people to interact more frequently with one another. They need to share occasional adversity and even find common "enemies." They need to support and help one another in good times and bad. They need to remember that universities are a meritocracy: What matters is how well people perform, not who they are. Finally, they need to hold people accountable for their actions. Just as coaches bring athletes together to create community, administrators and faculty must do the same for the rest of campus.

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